

THE PROCLAIMER

JAN/FEB 2024

A BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF CALVARY CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

CALVARY CHRISTIAN
REFORMED CHURCH IS
CHRIST-CENTERED
BIBLE-BELIEVING
GOSPEL-MOTIVATED
COMMUNITY-BUILDING

OUR MISSION IS TO
PROCLAIM THE GOOD
NEWS OF JESUS
IN WORD AND DEED
HERE, NEAR, AND FAR.

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CLASSIS LAKE SUPERIOR CHURCH COUNSELOR



As a pastor at Calvary, there are many roles and responsibilities I carry out beyond the ministry of Calvary. One of the lesser-known roles is that of a Church Counselor. Whenever a church in the Christian Reformed denomination is vacant (without a pastor), the regional body of churches (called a "Classis") assigns a Church Counselor to help guide the church through their vacancy.

Calvary Church is part of Classis Lakes Superior which is composed of 25 churches in the United States and Canada. Classis Lake Superior currently has seven churches without a pastor. This past year, I was assigned to be the Church Counselor for Grace CRC in Inver

Grove as well as Faith CRC in New Brighton. Just this past month, Grace CRC installed a new pastor so my responsibilities as Church Counselor for them are complete.

My role as a Church Counselor involves working with the council and/or search teams as they prepare for and call someone to be their pastor. This involves being available for discussion/insight,

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Editorial by
Nick Van Beek
Lead Pastor
pastornick@calvarycrc.net



...Editorial continued from page 1

communicating frequently with church leaders, providing the Classis with updates on how a church is doing, being present for important meetings, and praying for churches during their vacancy. When a church extends a Letter of Call (a job offer), it's the Church Counselor's job to sign the letter and do so knowing rules and procedures were followed, due diligence has been done in the search, and believing that this is God's will for the church.

While a vacancy can be a meaningful time for a church, it can also be hard. Searches for pastors can often take longer than desired.

Often, churches are forced to answer bigger questions about their ministry and vision; these discussions are not always easy.

The purpose of this article is not only to let you know what I've been up to, but to ask for your prayers and love for churches without a pastor. Please pray for Faith CRC in New Brighton and for all the churches in Classis Lake Superior without a pastor. And, pray that God will continue to raise up pastors to lead His Church!

By Pastor Nick



MINISTRY UPDATE

NEAR

Preaching Group with Local CRC Pastors

In January of 2021, Travis Deur, who is the Faith Formation pastor at Faith Christian Reformed Church in New Brighton, asked me to join a preaching with other local CRC pastors. We meet on Wednesday mornings via Zoom to talk about ministry and discuss a ministry-related book. I have greatly enjoyed the group for the friendships and the continuing education.

In addition to Travis, the other members of the group are Kyle Sandison (pastor at Trinity Hill), John Keizer (retired pastor at Faith CRC), and Larry Vanderaa (retired missionary at Faith CRC). We have counseled each other through challenges in ministry, shared sermon series ideas, and checked in with family life. We are hoping to get some of the new ministers in Classis Lake Superior to join our group.

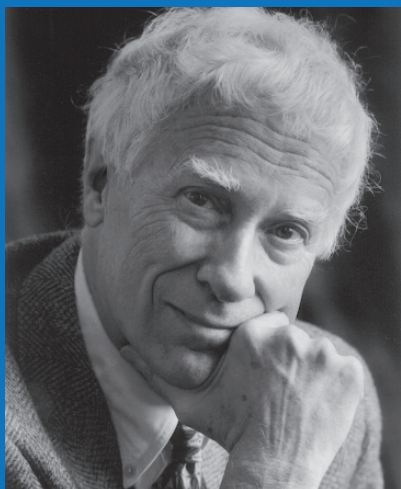
The book discussions have deepened my faith in Christ and my theological commitments to the Reformed faith. I have been able to use content from these books and discussions in sermons, Bible studies, and youth ministry events. Below are the books we have read and a few takeaways.

Until Justice and Peace Embrace by Nicolas Wolterstorff

- God's shalom provides world formative Christianity that affects social structures.
- Liberation theology and Neo-Calvinism both have attributes that can bring shalom to our society but both also fall short.
- The biblical picture of shalom, especially revealed in Isaiah, is a human being living

The Epic of Eden by Sandra Richter

- The patriarchal system of the Ancient Israelites was corrupted by sin like any other authority, but God's intent is that the patriarch would provide legal, economic, and spiritual care for his family.
- God did not make a mistake when he anointed Saul as king. He showed the people what worldly kings do and how they fail. This set the stage for David, the king of God's choosing, to take the throne.



Nicolas Wolterstorff,
Professor of Philosophy
at Calvin College for 30 years



Sandra Ricther,
Professor of Old Testament
at Westmont College



Gardner Taylor,
Pastor of Concord Baptist
Church in Brooklyn, New York
for 40 years

The Parables of Jesus by James Montgomery Boice

- The church has interpreted the parables in many different ways throughout the years, but based on Jesus’ own interpretation of a few parables, we are given the interpretive key to understand them.
- This book and our discussions about it inspired me and helped prepare me to lead the Anchor Squad through the parables this year. The parables provide concrete stories and deeper meaning that can nourish teenagers of all backgrounds.

Other books we have read and discussed:

A Little Handbook for Preachers: 10 Practical Ways to a Better Sermon by Mary Hulst

The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God by Dallas Willard

Learning from a Legend: What Gardner Taylor Can Teach Us About Preaching by Jared E. Alcántara

The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics by Ched Myers

Eli Groenendyk
Pastor of Discipleship
Pastor.eli.calvary@gmail.com



History of Two Trees

Over 40 years ago my sister, Verla, planted an orange seed and a grapefruit seed in a flower pot and gave them to me. With appropriate care, they grew and grew and became nice looking plants. They continued to grow and soon they were small trees. They lived outside of our house during summer months and were brought into our house during the cold months. They continued to thrive! They would need to be trimmed from time to time when they would touch the ceiling or become too wide. About ten years ago we decided they needed a new home! Being a lover of plants, our son Kelsey wanted them for his apartment and we were happy to keep them in the family! For the last ten years the trees lived with Kelsey and he loved having them. The routine was the same, inside or outside depending on the season and being trimmed when needed. With the passing of Kelsey the trees came back to our house - they were part of the family - but we also knew they couldn’t stay with us.

I was more than pleased to find out the trees could move to the newly renovated area in our church! After 40 years, the trees still live on but now in memory of Kelsey.

By Sharon and Dalen Asche



LEADING THE MISSION

Council Update

HERE

We pray you enjoyed and were blessed by our Advent, Christmas, and New Year's celebrations. We are looking forward to 2024 and to the second half of Calvary's 2023/24 church year and we hope you are too.

Deacon and Elder Nominees

It may seem early to start thinking about our Annual Congregational Meeting and selecting deacons and elders to replace those who will retire this coming May. However, the nomination process is thorough, includes many steps, and is structured to provide you with well qualified Council candidates. The nomination process starts this month. Very soon, you (each and every one of you) will be invited to submit names of Calvary members you believe would be good deacons or elders. We need your suggestions by mid-February so please begin thinking and praying about who you will recommend. We will provide guidelines and more details shortly.

Calvary Bookkeeper

Dianne DePenning has quietly and productively served as Calvary's bookkeeper for over ten years. Dianne has done a great job and next time you see her, please thank her for all the unnoticed, behind the scenes, but incredibly important work that she has done and continues doing. Dianne decided it is time to retire as our bookkeeper and that will be effective at the end of this fiscal year, which is May 31, 2024. Kay Harkema will take over as our bookkeeper on June 1, 2024. Kay

is a long-time Calvary member, is a member of our Facilities staff, and has a few decades of impressive business experience which make her highly qualified. We are very thankful for both Dianne and Kay, for their dedication to Calvary, for their knowledge and abilities, and for their ability to work well with anyone (they are both able to work with me, and that says a lot.)

Pastor Sabbatical Policy

The Council decided it was time to consider developing a Sabbatical Policy for our Pastors. We consulted with Dave Den Haan who works in the Pastor-Church Relations (now called Thrive) department of our denomination's offices in Michigan. We reviewed Sabbatical Policies from 30 other churches and reviewed their rationale for having such a policy. As a Council we spent time deliberating on it as well as the rationale for sabbaticals. We decided to write a draft policy and then determine if we should go further. After reviewing the draft policy, the Council unanimously agreed to establish a Sabbatical Policy for our Pastors. The draft is being finalized and we plan to provide details on the final version at our Annual Congregational Meeting in May.

Why do we believe we need a Sabbatical Policy at this time, when Calvary seems to have done well without one for many decades? Did our former pastors not deserve a sabbatical? What is up?

Our former pastors were certainly deserving of sabbaticals at the appropriate times in their ministries. At the same time, ministry has changed significantly over the past 10 and 20 years and the need for sabbaticals are greater today. In addition, awareness of the benefits of pastor sabbaticals is growing in churches today.

Dave Den Haan pointed us to resources on the Pastor-Church Relations website that in part say:

"We consider sabbaticals to be an essential form of care offered to pastors, nurturing health and sustaining pastors for the long haul of ministry. Healthier pastors are healthier leaders, so congregations too will benefit!"



A Barna Christian Research article from June, 2023 stated:

“Data from the Resilient Pastor research shows that between 2015 and 2022, all aspects of pastors’ well-being—spiritual, mental and emotional—experienced a significant decrease. Overall quality of life, having true friends and even the respect pastors say they receive by those in their community have all dipped lower.”

Barna goes on to strongly recommend sabbaticals as one way to restore well-being, quality of life, and a renewed ability for pastors to serve in ministry. Barna Christian Research is a highly respected Christian research organization that is often quoted by CNN, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, Fox News, Chicago Tribune, Huffington Post, the New York Times, and many others.

In part, the introduction to Calvary’s draft Pastor Sabbatical Policy states:

“Our sabbatical policy underscores our commitment to the holistic development of our pastoral leaders, acknowledging the demanding nature of their vocation. Sabbaticals are not only a means of rejuvenation for pastors but also a strategic investment in the overall health of our faith community. By providing dedicated time for rest, reflection, and continued learning, we aim to empower our pastors to return with renewed passion and insights, enhancing their ability to serve and inspire the congregation.”

The policy will be finalized at the Council’s January or February meeting and we will then share more details with you.

Elmer Jelgerhuis
Council Chairperson
On behalf of Calvary’s Council



CALVARY COUNCIL

Elders

Jason Byers
Matt De Kam
Ruth DeVries
Elmer Jelgerhuis
Eileen Rosenwinkel
Jon Van Hulzen
Paul Vliem

Deacons

Josh Abercrombie
Karen Groen
Joel Kamp
Matt Koelewyn
Brenda Liddle
Marion Sandfort
Rosanne Van Marion

Officers

Council Chair: Elmer Jelgerhuis
Council Vice-chair: Jon Van Hulzen
Council Clerk: Paul Vliem
Consistory Chair: Nick Van Beek
Consistory Vice-chair: Elmer Jelgerhuis
Consistory Clerk: Jon Van Hulzen
Deacon Chair: Matt Koelewyn
Treasurer: Josh Abercrombie
Deacon Clerk: Joel Kamp
Membership Clerk: Randy Hedman

Shepherding Districts

District 1: A – E
E: Jason Byers, D: Roseanne Van Marion
District 2: F – L
E: Ruth DeVries, D: Joel Kamp
District 3: M – Soerens
E: Jon Van Hulzen, D: Karen Groen
District 4: Spoelstra – Z
E: Eileen Rosenwinkel D: Brenda Liddle

Council Teams

Shepherding Team: Pastor Nick, Jason Byers, Ruth De Vries, Karen Groen, Brenda Liddle, Joel Kamp, Eileen Rosenwinkel, *Marion Sandfort, Jon Van Hulzen, Rosanne Van Marion, Paul Vliem

Administrative Team: Josh Abercrombie, *Elmer Jelgerhuis, Matt Koelewyn, Matt De Kam, Jake Kamp

Youth Ministries Team: *Pastor Eli, Jamie Abercrombie, Mateo DeKam, Kara Feikema, Pam Schmidt * indicates chairperson

SPHERE SOVEREIGNTY

Interview with
Craig Herman

NEAR



Where do you work?

This will be a retrospective, since I retired in May from Optum (part of UnitedHealth Group) after 18 years; and prior to that I worked as a management consultant at Accenture for 19 years.

What are your roles and responsibilities?

During my time at Optum, I held three primary roles: VP of Merger Acquisition Integration, SVP & General Manager of Public Sector Behavioral Health, and I concluded my career as COO of Optum Advisory Services. In all of my roles, my focus was on growing the business and improving operations to run effectively.

What are you currently working on that excites you?

According to my wife (Kris), my primary focus now that I am retired is to not bug her too much. As I reflect back on my career, the role that most excited me was running the public sector behavioral health business. We provided health solutions for Medicare and Medicaid members – some with very significant life challenges. Finding solutions to help individuals

struggling with mental health and/or substance abuse challenges was probably the hardest, but also the most rewarding.

Since God is sovereign over every sphere, how do you see God at work in your work?

I've shared my personal story with a few friends in the congregation, but I have several family members that have dealt and are dealing with significant mental health issues throughout their lives. I really saw God at work in my career journey as the business experience I gained at Accenture was brought together with the compassion of my personal family experience to influence the business decisions I made in my role at Optum.

Are your coworkers Christians? Have you had opportunities to talk with them about what they believe? Have you been able to share your faith in Christ with them?

Some are, some are not. One of the ways I have found to start a conversation is during the typical Monday meeting small talk where people ask "so what did you do this weekend?" One of the things I include is saying that I went to church. Several times I've had follow-on conversations from just that.

Another situation comes to mind. I was visiting one of our satellite offices in New Mexico and in the middle of the workday some of the office staff had a shaman visit to perform smudging/cleansing of the office site. When asked if I wanted my office "cleansed", I declined and said I was a follower of Jesus Christ – opportunities sometimes present themselves when you least expect them!

COMMUNITY BUILDING

15 things you
didn't know about
Ed and Cel
Schrotenboer



1. They both grew up in Holland, Michigan and met at Holland Christian High School.
2. They started dating while attending Calvin College. After graduating from Calvin, Ed attended the University of Michigan Business School and obtained a Master's degree in Business Administration. He remains a loyal Wolverines sports fan. Go Blue! Cel attended

Calvin College for one year and graduated from Blodgett Hospital School of Nursing.

3. Ed is the second oldest of six and Cel the oldest of five siblings. All of their siblings live in the Holland, MI area except for one of Cel's sisters, who lives in Florida.
4. Ed's career was in the defense industry responsible for program management and pricing at Univac, which became Lockheed Martin following multiple mergers. He left Lockheed Martin in 2008 to start his own income tax preparation and financial planning business, Ednomics.
5. Cel spent many years as an oncology nurse at Hennepin County Medical Center and then as an infusion nurse for Fairview Home infusion (FHI). She obtained certificates in both oncology and infusion nursing. At retirement she was part of the Quality and Education Department at FHI, responsible for new employee orientation and infection control.
6. They have been married for 53 years and have two daughters, Melissa and Sara. They have been blessed with five grandchildren and one great granddaughter. They all reside in the Twin City area except for one grandson who lives in San Antonio, Texas.
7. Ed's ancestor, Johannes

Schrotenboer immigrated from the Netherlands to Holland, MI in 1847 with Albertus Van Raalte the town founder.

8. Cel's mother was born in Prinsburg, MN while her father, Rev. Harry Blystra, was the pastor of the Christian Reformed church there.
9. Growing up Ed and Cel both picked blueberries for six cents per pound, picking 100 pounds and earning \$6 on a good day. While in high school Ed worked for a gardening center and Cel worked as a soda jerk at a local dairy.
10. Cel played the clarinet through high school; particularly enjoying playing in the marching and pep bands.
11. Ed enjoys baseball and has played rotisserie baseball since 1984. He has attended a game at most of the major league parks. His all time favorite game attended: the seventh game of the Twins versus the Cardinals in the 1987 World Series.

12. Ed has always enjoyed learning and reading, encouraging the grandchildren to read and experience new pursuits. While attending Calvin he was often found in the Hekman Library. Today he listens to audio books, takes an outdoor walk every day and enjoys watching sports.

13. While growing up, Cel loved to ice skate. Today she enjoys reading, scrapbooking, hiking, old movies and spending time with the grandchildren.

14. When traveling to Michigan to visit family in Holland we have a small list of must do's: go to Ottawa beach and see Big Red, hike the sand dunes and eat at Russ' and Captain Sundae.

15. We currently live in Applewood Pointe of Eden Prairie. We are enjoying the community of an independent senior living cooperative. We are thankful to God for the multiple blessings we have experienced throughout our lives.



Worship Service Schedule

January 7

Worship led by Pastor Nick
Life in Christ:
Song of Sovereignty
Offering: NCBC Food Shelf (159)

January 14

Worship led by Pastor Nick
Life in Christ:
Works and Workmanship
Offering: Campus Ministries
Fund (136)

January 21

Worship led by Pastor Nick
Life in Christ: Fellow Citizens
Offering: Christian Education
Fund (136)

January 28

Worship led by Pastor Nick
Life in Christ:
Rooted and Grounded
Offering: Cadets (82)

February 4

Worship led by Pastor Nick
Life in Christ: Grace & Gifts
Offering: Honduras Discretionary
Fund (151)

February 11

Worship led by Pastor Eli
Life in Christ: Christ-Like Love
Offering: Resonate Global-
Sytsma (162)

February 18

Worship led by Pastor Nick
The Seven Signs:
Water into Wine
Offering: Christian Education
Fund (154)

February 25

Worship led by Pastor Nick
The Seven Signs:
The Official's Son
Offering: Calvary Ministry Fund (1)

CALVARY BIRTHDAYS

HERE

Happy Birthday Calvary Family!

We like wishing you a happy birthday. If you're a member of Calvary, your name is automatically included in the birthday lists of the Proclaimer. If you're a regular attender and would like to have your birthday included, please contact Cheryl Rettig in the church office and let her know. If for any reason you'd like to have your name removed from the list, please let the church office know that as well by emailing: secretary@calvarycrc.net

January Birthdays


Jan 2	Amos Vliem	Jan 18	Nate Hall
Jan 4	Myles Rindels	Jan 20	Maggie Feikema
Jan 6	Tim Schmidt	Jan 24	Vicki Hall, Scott Mellema
Jan 7	Joni Hall	Jan 25	Jack Van Marion
Jan 8	Eli De Kam	Jan 26	Natalie Hoekman
Jan 14	Missy Kamp	Jan 30	Linda Ribbens
Jan 15	Jaclyn Brouwer	Jan 31	Breanna Beckering, Zach Rindels
Jan 16	Emilyn Bosch, Addison Koelewyn		
Jan 17	Paislee Olson-Bengry		

February Birthdays

Feb 3	Wren Wingblade, Molly Zylstra	Feb 19	Kris Herman, Paul Vliem
Feb 5	Sarah Zwagerman	Feb 20	Sharon Asche
Feb 11	Dave Blankespoor, Simon Bosch	Feb 22	Wayne Tobak
Feb 14	Zayna Oliver	Feb 23	Pat Douma, Reuben Groenendyk, Malachi Rindels, Carrie Van Beek
Feb 16	Ruth DeVries, Donna Mulder, Paula Rindels	Feb 24	Caden Orcutt
Feb 17	Peter Bosch, Ben Gorter	Feb 28	Ruth Muyskens



www.calvarytwincities.org

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